



September 5, 2003

Possible Amendments to the DC Appropriations Act (H.R. 2765)

Amendment Made in Order Under the Unanimous Consent Agreement of July 25th:

Reps. Davis, Tom/Frelinghuysen/Boehner -- Authorizes \$10 million for fiscal year 2004 (and "such sums" through fiscal year 2008) in *new* (i.e. not diverted from existing education resources) federal funding to DC to provide individual students up to \$7,500 annually in need-based scholarship funds for tuition, fees, and transportation at DC private schools of their parents' choosing. Priority would be given to low-income students in low-performing schools, as identified by the No Child Left Behind Act.

Eligible students would have to be DC residents, and their family income could not exceed 185% of the federal poverty level. Participating schools could not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, or sex (and maintains current law defining sex discrimination). However, religious schools could maintain their character through their hiring practices, and parents could still choose schools that offer single-sex classes.

The Secretary of Education would distribute grant money (for not more than five years) to various nonprofit organizations and DC government agencies that would have to apply to the U.S. Department of Education and demonstrate to the Secretary how they will recruit students, find participating schools, and ensure that funds are used properly. Grantees could not use more than 3% of grant funds for administrative expenses. Each grantee would have to submit an annual report to the Secretary regarding its activities and academic achievement of the students in the program. The Secretary would then have to prepare for Congress a report on the information gathered from the grantees. Further, the Secretary would be required to evaluate and report to Congress on the program's overall progress. No more than 3% of funds appropriated for DC private school choice could go toward the Secretary's evaluations and reports.

All RSC Members are strongly encouraged to vote for the Davis/Frelinghuysen/Boehner amendment.

Additional Resources on DC School Choice:

How Members of Congress practice School Choice:

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Education/BG1684.cfm>

Lessons in School Choice:

<http://www.heritage.org/Press/Commentary/ed090303a.cfm>

Heritage Analysis of D.C. Scholarship Proposal:

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Education/Bg1671.cfm>

Washington Post Op-Ed by Washington D.C. Mayor Anthony Williams:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A17175-2003Sep2.html>

Education and Workforce Committee Dear Colleague with Senator Feinstein Op-Ed:

<http://edworkforce.house.gov/issues/108th/education/parentalchoice/DCSchoolChoiceDearCol11.pdf>

Cato "Need for Educational Freedom in the Nation's Capital":

<http://www.cato.org/pubs/pas/pa-461es.html>

Amendments Pre-printed in the Congressional Record:

The following amendments have been pre-printed in the Congressional Record, however under the unanimous consent agreement, amendments do not need to be pre-printed and may be offered at any time without significant notice.

#1 Manzullo: Requires that no funds be used to procure, subject to the Buy American Act, articles, materials, and supplies manufactured in the United States that do not have at least 65% domestic content (as opposed to the 50% in current law). The same requirement would to contracts for construction, alteration, and repair of any public building or public work funded by the bill. *This amendment is subject to a point of order.*

#2 Hefley: Reduces total federal appropriations made in this bill (other than appropriations required to be made by a provision of law) by \$4,660,000 which is 1% of the bill.

#3 Norton: Strikes the federal payment for a District of Columbia Scholarship Program (\$10 million, subject to authorization).